The Marker Lamp

Volume 55 **Number 2** **Spring 2009**

David Davis, MMR will be just one of the many fine layouts that will be open during the Lone Star Region Convention June 3-7.

Trinity River Interchange

LSR 2009

June 3 - 7, 2009

WWW.TRINITYRIVERINTERCHANGE.COM

In This Issue

President's Message	3
Trinity River Interchange	4
Railfan Field Kit	10
Elf Stories Part Two	11
Up The Track	12
Mastering Modeling	13
Petticoat Junction	14
From The Past	14
Secretary/Treasurer's Report	14
Directors' Reports	15

The Marker Lamp

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The editorial policy of **The Marker Lamp**, the official publication of **The Lone Star Region**, shall be to contribute, wherever possible, to the promotion, growth and understanding of the hobby of Model Railroading, within the confines of good taste and responsibility.

The Marker Lamp is published once each quarter by and for the members of **The Lone Star Region** of **The National Model Railroad Association**.

Articles appearing in **The Marker Lamp** are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the officers or membership of **The Lone Star Region** or **The National Model Railroad Association**.

Address all correspondence, news, photos and drawings to the editor. All material will be gladly accepted and will be used depending on the availability of space and suitability of material. None will be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided.

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President's Message

by Jerry Schoenberg, MMR

Hi fellow Lone Star Region members! With lots of good memories, I realize that this is my final *Marker Lamp* column as your president. I have really enjoyed representing a group of very talented and giving men and women that have strived to keep your Region successful.

Through all of these volunteered efforts, we have kept our membership fairly constant and our Region continues to be sound financially. I have been particularly pleased with our Youth Program, and those that have made model railroading a part of many young people's lives.

Two successes, I believe to be important, have been the Region's decision to provide *The Marker Lamp* to all its' members at no additional fee, and the decision to provide a cap to the LSR's net worth. This provision allows the possibility to give back excess funds to our Convention attendees. Additionally, the Lone Star Region's Achievement Program has been among the most successful in the NMRA.

During my eight years of service as an officer, it has become more and more obvious that those "lovers of our hobby" are what really make it a joy. Without the work of all the members, committee chairs, division directors and officers who devote their time and energy, the real fun and friendships would not be there for us. In the capacity of Adviser, I look forward to continued success.

I hope to see a good turnout at our Trinity River Interchange Convention. Be aware that many efforts are taking place to make this a memorable occasion. From clinics to tours, youths to masters, rails to non rails, there will be something for everyone. And this year, we will have a LSR sponsored train ride. If you have not registered, call up the convention web site and look over "what you don't want to miss".

See you in DFW.

View from the Spar Pole

By Chuck Lind, MMR

Laurie and I took a trip up to ride the Grapevine railroad on April 4th. This wasn't going to be a normal day on the railroad; it was "Day out with Thomas."

We have a grandson living in Houston and this was going to be his 3rd birthday and he wanted to see Thomas. For those of you with grandchildren, you know that the answer was going to be yes. Hotel arrangements were made and tickets purchased for the big event. While I have purchased him several pieces of Thomas (that I am told he sleeps with, I leave my trains in the train room). I was not ready for the excitement of the day. Up early and a good breakfast, then off to Grapevine since we were on the second train and we didn't want to be late. Parking was already filling up and I don't believe I have ever seen so many excited children all looking for the same thing. When that big blue engine with eyes and a smile came into view it was hard to contain their excitement. His mom and dad were with us, so when they saw the line forming for a picture with Thomas they moved quickly getting right up front in a few minutes. The line was well over 25 yards long. After photos we moved to the boarding line to get ready for our train ride pulled by Thomas (actually a diesel pushes on the rear) and with a toot of his whistle and smoke coming out of his stack we started to board. The train filled quickly, all the children eager to find their seats. We were greeted and heard all about Thomas. Songs were sung so by the time we were ready to leave the station the children were all on the edge of their seats.

When we returned from the ride they all headed to the big tent where they had Thomas layouts set up for the children to play with as well as puzzles, games and tattoos. You can ask Laurie about her Thomas tattoo. Of course there was a large vendor room where you could find anything Thomas that you wanted. I did spend some time in there and believe I have figured out how to convert one to On3. Don't laugh, this is the next generation that will be taking over our hobby and by the amount of children at the event if we only get 2% of them to stay in trains, we will have a very healthy hobby for many years to come. So next time when you have an open house and the children are viewing your layout, you may just want to have Thomas or one of his friends pull a train around your layout. I know I will.

"Trinity River Interchange Gazette"

—SPRING "*FINAL CONVENTION SPECIAL*" EDITION—

Contributors: Larry Swigert, Jerry Hoverson, TC Carr, Matt Latham and The 2009 Convention Team

A WORD FROM JERRY'S CORNER…

Time is fast approaching for YOUR 2009 LSR Convention, the **Trinity River Interchange**. We've got a **fantastic line up** for you this year that will blow your socks off!

Just a reminder before we get to the fun stuff. This year's convention will run from the **3rd of June to the 7th** and is packed with exciting activities for the Rails and Non-Rails alike.

"What's going on? " you ask. Well just check out this lineup…

CLINICS – 90 hours worth with many **new** presenters.

CONTEST – Don't forget this year's special contest is anything you can build in **"1 square foot"**.

GUEST SPEAKER – Railroad Icon **Harold Carstens**!

LAYOUT TOURS – Over 45 to see and **TWO Super Tours**

OPERATING SESSIONS – 95 slots on **14 layouts**

PROTOTYPE TOURS–Wait 'til you see these **3 great tours**!

REGISTRATION – Available now **online** with **"PayPal"**.

RAFFLE – Biggest ever. A clue **"Cab Ride"**!

SPECIAL EVENT – A **FREE train ride** on the **Grapevine Vintage Railroad** for **everyone**.

Want to know more?

Read on and also continue to check our website at www.trinityriverinterchange.com and be watching your emails for the latest updates.

HOTEL

The **Trinity River Interchange** will be held this year at the **Sheraton Grand Hotel**, centrally located just north of the **DFW airport** on Hwy 114. And, if you want to add a few extra vacation days, the Sheraton Grand has extended the LSR Special Rate so you can arrive up to 3 days before and stay up to 3 days after the convention at the same discounted convention rate.

Reservations can be made **through our website** or by contacting the hotel **directly at 972-929-8400** and asking for the "Lone Star Region Rate".

GREAT NEWS...2009 Registration cost is CUT $20.00 !!

Recession Special: We've been able to **CUT YOUR** registration cost this year **down $20.00 BELOW last year's cost!** Part of this cost reduction is thanks to the Lone Star Region sponsoring the ride on the Grapevine Vintage Railroad which is now FREE to all that attend. Also included is the Awards Banquet and Sunday morning breakfast.

AND MORE GOOD NEWS…

You now have **3 easy ways to register**. You can use the registration form with this *Marker Lamp*, you can go to our website and print off the registration form, or you can register online at www.trinityriverinterchange.com using **PayPal.** Now, it just doesn't get much easier then that!

GUEST SPEAKER – Marc LeChey

We've got a special guest speaker lined up for the Trinity River Interchange Banquet, **Harold Carstens**. That's right, **Harold Carstens** of **Carstens Publishing,** the publishers of **Railroad Model Craftsman** and **Railfan & Railroad** magazines. Harold, "Hal" as his friends call him, has agreed to entertain us with highlights and antidotes that have happened along the years as the Editor of one of the best model railroading magazines around. This promises to be a **great night** filled with **food, drink, friends, trains, and fun!**

PROTOTYPE TOURS - Les Brandt

We have **3 GREAT TOURS** planned for you this year…

THURSDAY TOUR: "The McKinney Avenue Transit Authority"

In 1981, while removing the asphalt and concrete to restore the original brick streets on historic McKinney and Cole Avenue, it was discovered that there were over 4800 feet of the old Dallas Railway and Terminal streetcar track still in place. That discovery sparked an idea and after hundreds of volunteer hours were spent restoring the original 4 vintage units, on July 22, 1989, "**MATA", The McKinney Avenue Transit Authority** re-introduced streetcars to the Dallas.

20 years later, with funding, help from local volunteers who spent endless hours restoring numerous vintage streetcars, and miles of additional track being laid, the MATA has evolved from a tourist attraction to one of the finest transit systems of its type in the Southwest. In 2008 MATA carried over 290,000 riders.

On this tour you will be able to go behind the scenes in the **MATA 3-TRACK CAR BAR** where the trolley fleet is housed, in addition to a restoration area, machine shop, service pit, and wood working shop .

Visitors will see at least one car in restoration as well as regular maintenance being performed on other cars in the fleet. There is a lounge downstairs for off duty motormen and the MAATA offices

are upstairs.

The active fleet includes 6 units with names like…**"Matilda", "Rosie", "Winnie", and #186... "The Green Dragon" (below).**

Two more units are in restoration including **"The Morning Star,"** which will be the first air conditioned wood-bodied interurban car in America and **"754"**, a 19-ton, 48 foot, 54 seat streetcar built in 1926. And, three more vintage beauties are awaiting restoration.

During your visit you will be told the entire story of MATA and see first hand what all it takes, behind the scene, to keep streetcars running on a daily schedule in Dallas. Photos will be allowed.

The grand climax of this tour will be **a 4.8 mile ride on one of the vintage trolleys all around the historic district of McKinney Avenue, the downtown area, and back.** That familiar clang of the trolley bell should paint a smile on your face for many days after your fun tour of the **McKinney Avenue Transit Authority!**

FRIDAY PROTOTYPE TOUR: *"The BNSF Network Operations Center":*

Ever wonder how BNSF dispatches its nationwide rail system? Join us on a tour of the **BNSF Network Operations Center in Fort Worth** and see how BNSF dispatches nearly the entire railroad from one room in the corporate headquarters in Fort Worth. At this location BNSF has 4 vintage business cars.

They have been carefully and totally restored in every detail. Inside the BNSF Headquarters, we will first tour the museum and art work display. Photography will be allowed.

Then, up to the second floor, cross what is known as "the bridge" to a **100 seat viewing room**.

There we will be treated to a 15 minute presentation on BNSF, the NOC, and what you are about to see. Following the presentation, the curtains across the front of the room will open and *you will be utterly amazed at what appears before your eyes*… a huge, **football field sized** room, full of giant TV screens and people busy controlling the BNSF rail operations.

Your host will describe what is going on and answer any questions you may have. **PLEASE NOTE:** Taking pictures here is okay, but *NO FLASH PICTURES ARE ALLOWED!*

Then, you will return downstairs to the BNSF Store where you can pick up a souvenir or two as a remembrance of your visit.

In all, the tour of the **BNSF Network Operations Center** will certainly be one of the *highlights* of your convention vacation!

SATURDAY PROTOTYPE TOUR: *"The Trinity Railway Express Corporate Headquarters and Maintenance Facilities"*

On this tour you will visit the **Trinity Railway Express Corporate Headquarters and Maintenance Facilities** where TRE's extensive fleet is maintained on a daily basis for busy commuter activity. In 2008 o**ver 2.5 million passengers** traveled between the cities of Dallas… the online suburbs… and Ft Worth on the TRE.

You will be able to examine all of the equipment used by TRE from the operator's perspective cab-side, to the maintenance technician's view of the equipment in the shops… Equipment ranging from EMD motive power to the "HEP" system (Head End Power) which is an ancillary CAT diesel that provides "Hotel Power" to the coaches.

THE RDC FLEET

Part of the Trinity Railway Express fleet you will see on the tour are Stainless Steel RDC's, manufactured by the Budd Corporation in the 1950's.

Each car has dual cabs to allow bi-directional operation from either end.

They were stripped down to their stainless steel shell and completely remanufactured inside and out to current specs and décor before beginning service with the TRE over a decade ago. **TRE** is the ***first commuter rail line In the Southwestern United States.*** **Over 4000 people rode it on its first day of operation.** These RDC units are still in operation today.

You will have **full access** to these cars **including the dual cabs** during the tour. **Photos allowed.**

THE BI-LEVEL FLEET

The rest of the TRE fleet consists of EMD locomotives that provide motive power to the TRE's bi-level cars and Cab Cars.

MOTIVE POWER: The **TRE F-59 PH** bull nose locomotives were built by EMD. They develop 3100 horsepower, weigh 260,000 pounds, and can attain a maximum speed of 83 MPH.

In 2001 the **TRE F-59 PHI** slant nose locomotives were purchased new from

EMD and added to the TRE Fleet.

There will be an optional *full access tour* of one of these diesels, from front to back! *So, at this point, please note:* *You ***MUST*** wear solid toe, full hard sole shoes and long pants to go on the **Trinity Railway Express Tour.** *NO OPENED TOED SHOES, FLIP FLOPS, SANDALS, TANK TOPS OR SHORTS* will be allowed.

Also, if you plan to do the *optional* diesel engine tour it is recommended that you wear old clothes as it will be a total access, hands-on tour of the cab, engine compartment, controls, etc and you might get slightly dirty or greasy in the process. **Photos will be allowed.**

THE BI-LEVEL AND CAB CAR FLEET:

The Bi-Level coaches and cab cars were built by Hawker-Siddeley of Canada and Bombardier. They weigh 122,000 pounds and have a top speed capability of 95 mph. Capacity for these cars is 123 to 152 passengers. The trains are bidirectional. One end being a "dummy" Cab Car with no power, just cab control capabilities, as the EMD diesels provide all of the power.

NOTE: **Full access** will be granted to all of these cars **including the dummy cab as well as one of the diesel engines**. **Photos are allowed.**

"TRE" MAINTAINANCE AND OPERATION

There are several large buildings on the campus, from main corporate office, to maintenance and overhaul facilities, to the wash and clean up facilities. **We will be given a complete, hands-on tour of all of them during this tour.**

All engineering and operations are controlled in the corporate headquarters.

You will have **full access** to this area and be able to watch operations as the trains are routed each direction. And, you can ask any questions you like. I did and had some very interesting answers as far as day-to-day and detailed operational activities and procedures. **Photos are allowed**.

The TRE Maintenance Facilities:

All maintenance is done on campus in several buildings. On this tour you will have **total access to the TRE facilities** where you will experience every aspect the TRE Maintenance Facility, hands-on and up close!

There are two double inspection and overhaul pits where one car and one locomotive can be inspected, refitted, and repaired on each pit at the same time.

You will see the huge wheels and find out about wear tolerances and inspection requirements.

Also, visit the tool room, diesel engine rebuilding facility, and other shop areas used to keep the TRE Fleet in operation.

During the tour you will see how the combo units of the 260,000 pound locomotives can be dropped and changed out.

You will be able to inspect the wheel "combo units" up close as they are readied for installation..

Also, you will see how the wheel and electric traction motors are inspected, repaired, and reinstalled to provide the Diesel's traction effort.

So guys, if you ever wanted to know all of the behind-

the-scene information about traction power or Commuter Rail Service, ***this will definitely be the tour for you!*** Your visit to the **Trinity Railway Express Facilities** will be one you long remember and certainly be one of the **highlights** of your **"Trinity River Interchange" 2009 LSR Convention experience**!

CLINICS

Clinics will be non-stop from Wednesday evening through Saturday, some 90 hours worth! There will be many new presenters and some of your old favorites as well.

Detailing a Blank Wall – Larry Alfred, MMR
Larry is the president of the Mid-Continent Region and will be showing us how to spice up an otherwise drab area of many layouts.

Tools of the Trade – Tracy Mitchell, MMR
Tracy will be showing us many modeling tool ideas, some are quite unique.

Modeling Prototypical Industrial Details – John Best
Want to make that industry more prototypical? John will show you how.

Making Aspen Trees – Charlie Kirk
Modeling Colorado? You'll need these by the grove and Charlie will show you how.

Cadrail Clinic – Tom Browning and Ken Klaviter
Tom and Ken will show you many tricks to get the most out of Cadrail.

Backdrop Painting – Gary Rush
Gary will not only show you how easy this can be, but also demonstrate along the way.

Photographing Your Models – Dave Lamberts
Now that you've built that fantastic model, Dave will show you how to make it shine in a photo.

Computer Enhanced Photography – Chuck Lind, MMR
Since Dave showed you how to photo your model, Chuck will show you how to make it look real with computer enhancements.

Control that Tortoise – Jerry Hoverson, MMR
This will be a two-part clinic. The first part will show you why and how you may want to use momentary contacts to control a tortoise machine. The second part is the extra fare portion where you'll build one to **keep.**

Building a Tapered Water Tank – Al Boos, MMR
Al will show us tricks and tips on how to make a difficult task easy.

Achievement Program Judging – Pat Harriman, MMR and Paul Richardson, MMR
OK, talk about experts. Here the past and present National AP Chairman will show us how judging is done. Whether you are a judge or just want to understand why you may have gotten that last score you need to attend this one.

Beginning Operations with RailOp – Chris Atkins
Looking to get into computer generated switch list operations? Chris will show you how to get started.

Advanced Operations with RailOp – Chris Atkins
OK, so you already know how to use RailOP. Chris will show you some advanced techniques.

DCC Decoder Installations – Steve Barkley
This is a 4-hour session where Steve will provide guidance on how to install decoders in a variety of locomotives.

Constructing Craftsman Kits – Brett Gallant
Here's another advice from the expert clinic. Brett is the owner of Sierra West Models, one of the premier craftsman kit manufactures.

Steam Generator Cars – Lloyd Keyser, MMR
Lloyd will show us the whys and wherefores of Steam Generator Cars, which were critical during the steam to diesel transition period.

Modeling in Z scale – Tom Browning
Ever wonder how they did that in such a tiny scale? Tom will show you how he does it and has done well in contests with his "tiny train" models.

Texas State Railroad – Chap Boaz and Lori Pennington
Come find out all the exciting things going on at the Texas State Railroad.

Phoenix Sound, not just for G scale – Barry Bogs
What? How can that be? Barry will show us.

Building a Walthers 3-in-1 kit – Fran and Miles Hale, MMR
You may recognize Fran and Miles, there the couple that does the Woodland Scenics "how-to" videos. This is an extra fare clinic but you get to keep the kit.

12 Years living with DCC – Steve Barkley
Has it been that long? Steve will show us how DCC has changed the face of model railroading.

40 Years on the SC&W – Gil Freitag
This is one of the old favorites, Gil will show us the history of the Stony Creek & Western.

Operations 101 – Fred Bock, MMR and Tom Crosthwait
If you missed this one in Houston you've got a second chance. It was one of the most popular clinics given.

Setting the Scene – John Lowrance, MMR
Here John will show us some basic techniques to make that scene more realistic.

Kitbashing and Painting Figures – Marty Vaughn – MMR
Marty is another Mid-Continent Region member that will be joining us this year and showing us how to modify and paint figures to fit the scene.

Painting a Brick Wall – Bob Brendle
Bob will show us how to take that plain plastic brick wall and make it come to life.

Planning for Operations – Lee Johnson
Lee's been operating for many years and has some great insight in how to plan ahead and make operating your layout much more enjoyable.

Track & Wheel Interrelationships – Ed McCarney
Why does that one car always derail on that switch? Ed will explain what to look for to ensure smooth running.

Weathering Track – Robert Mangrum
Now that things are running smoothly Robert will show you how to make it look like it's been there a while.

Weathering Buildings and Rolling Stock – Robert Mangrum
So the track looks used, how about the cars rolling over it or the structures sitting next to it?

Moving the Museum of the American Railroad – Bob LaPrelle
In case you haven't heard the Museum of the American Railroad is moving to Frisco. Bob, the president & CEO, will present how they plan to pull this off**.**

Scratchbuilding Simple Structures – Larry Alfred, MMR
Larry's back for a second clinic this time sharing tips and tricks to scratch build simple structures.

Painting Brass Locomotives – Charles Goodrich, MMR

Charles will show us techniques to turn that gold colored loco into a thing of beauty.

LAYOUT TOURS – Steve Willis

We've lined up over **45 layouts** in the DFW area for you to visit; many are ONLY open for NMRA events. In fact, we've got layouts all the way from **Z scale to G scale**. There are so many you'll have to pick and choose 'cause you won't have time to see them all. Be sure and visit our website at www.trinityriverinterchage.com for a complete list.

So you don't want to drive yourself? No problem, we've got **TWO Super Tours** set up where you can just sit back, enjoy the ride, and get to see some select layouts. The first tour is set up for **Friday** and will visit layouts in the **Division 1**. **Division 3** gets its turn on **Saturday**. For details see the website.

OPERATING SESSIONS- Jim Norwood

Where else can you travel to another city and get to play with someone else's toys? And for free! What a deal! We have **17 sessions** setup on **14 different layouts** for a total of **95 operating slots.** I challenge the LSR to fill them up!

The normal $10 deposit for each session needs to be included with your registration, but you will get it back from the layout owners when you show up for the session.

NON-RAIL ACTIVITES – Our Ladies

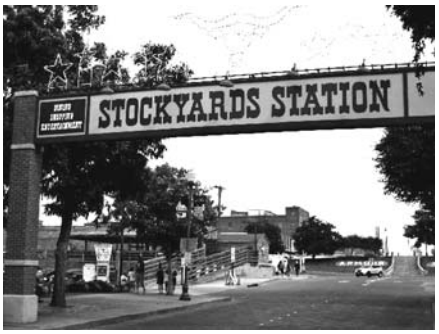
From many interesting clinics to all of the shopping you can stand to a tour of the Delaney Vineyard in beautiful Grapevine, the Non-Rails have quite an array of fun convention activities planned for you. Even heard a rumor that some "guys" have signed up for the winery event. Go to www.trinityriverinterchange.com/content/nonrail on the website or "Petticoat Junction" for all of the details.

SPECTACULAR LSR SPONSORED "SPECIAL EVENT"

The 2009 Convention gets an exciting kick-off Thursday evening with the FREE **"Trinity River Interchange Great Train Ride"!** Join other model railroaders and their families for an adventure back into the glory days of early Texas aboard the 1920' and 30's Victorian style coaches of the Grapevine Vintage Railroad. And what a GREAT time we'll have doing it !

We depart from the historic Grapevine Rail Station located in the Cotton Belt Railroad District of Grapevine, home to many historical gems such as the Grapevine Historical Museum, the Blacksmith's shop, the Farmers' Market and many restored pieces of vintage railroad equipment.

Light refreshments will be served along the way AND we'll be entertained by the fantastic vocals of "4 Ever Young". They are Dallas's premier Doo-Wop singing group, specializing in 50's and 60's rock-and-roll. You can learn more about them by visiting www.4ey.com.



You arrive in Ft. Worth at the Stockyards Station, the largest train station in the Southwest with more than 85,000 square feet of shopping, dining and meeting facilities.

Located in the heart of the Fort Worth Stockyards, the Stockyards Station exemplifies Texas by providing an exciting blend of old and new with Historic Walking Tours that visit the Texas Trail of Fame, The Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame and more… over 25 unique shops including a winery, art gallery and great restaurants that offer anything from ribs to enchiladas.

One last photo-op is watching your engine turned on the turntable…And then it's all aboard for the return trip home. A great train ride, 2 vintage rail facilities, fun shopping & site seeing, a working turntable, and photo-ops all along the way…The "Trinity River Interchange Great Train Ride".

It's not *just* a train ride… *It's a great evening of fun you won't soon forget!*

And remember, the **" Trinity River Interchange Great Train Ride"** is sponsored by the Lone Star Region and is totally FREE to ALL convention attendees.

SPONSORS & DOOR PRIZES: Larry Swigert

OVER $1000 in door prizes have been donated that you can take home with you from this year's LSR Convention, the **2009 Trinity River Interchange**. That's right, I said **over $1000!** Not a bad return for such a small registration fee!

Thanks to the support from some our fine sponsors such as **Discount Model Trains** and **HobbytownUSA Dallas,** the door prize total this year should be the largest of any convention yet. Other sponsors include **Minute Man Press** and **Russ Rail Stuff.**

And here is the best news... All you have to do **is register for the convention** and you will be automatically entered to win some of these great door prizes. So, send in the **2009 registration form *now*** and get ready to take home some of these wonderful prizes

SILENT AUCTION – Stan Schwartz

Start cleanin' out them train storage closets. Remember, one man's trash is another man's treasure!

RAFFLE - Larry Swigert

This year we will have an amazing group of items at different levels up for raffle. The mystery list will be revealed little by little in "breaking news" emails you will be receiving and when you come to the convention. However, just to wet your appetite, how's this for openers…

A "CAB RIDE" for YOU,

AND THREE FREE PASSES
for your family or friends on the "Texas State Railroad"!

Yep, it's true. The winner of this item will be able to select a fun "DELUXE RAIL ADVENTURE" aboard one of the TSR's vintage engines as it journeys between Palestine and Rusk. What a fun time with all of the photos you want in the cab and they even give you your own Engineer's Cap. Value…*OVER $400.00!* And this is just one of many top notch items that will be yours for just a few bucks on a raffle ticket!

2009 Convention Schedule – Jerry Hoverson

A detailed schedule will be provided in your registration package. In the meantime, here is a general overview schedule so you can start planning your visit:

Wednesday – Registration will begin at the **Trinity River Interchange Gazette (TRIG) newspaper stand** in the hotel lobby at 3pm and several layouts will be open for visiting on your way into town around the same time. Just about everything else starts at 7pm. Operating Sessions get under way, the contest room and the silent auction room will be open for entries and a welcome orientation. Clinics kick off at 8pm. There will also be a non-rail social event.

Thursday – Registration continues, the Contest room opens for entrants, the Silent Auction room opens, Clinics resume, and the tour to the **McKinney Avenue Transit Authority** and the **wine tasting tour** are on tap. The day winds up with the **free LSR sponsored ride on the Grapevine Vintage Railroad**.

Friday – Registration continues, the Contest and Silent Auction rooms will be open, Clinics continue with a great line up, and the **BNSF tour, Fort Worth Super Tour** and **non-rail necklace trip** are scheduled. Friday evening sees the end of the silent auction and contest entries. Judging will take place and another round of operating sessions in the afternoon and evenings.

Saturday – More tours and clinics. The prototype tour is to the **TRE shops** and the **Super tour** is to the **Dallas area layouts**. Of course there'll be plenty of drive yourself layouts to visit and don't forget to go to the Silent Auction room, settle up and pick up your treasures. The day ends up with a fantastic Awards Banquet with our guest speaker **Harold Carstens.**

Sunday – Breakfast is served along with the annual LSR meeting. There will be an LSR board meeting after that and we'll have **layouts open** for your viewing pleasure on your way out of town, and more good news, both Discount Model Trains and Hobbytown USA are open all Sunday afternoon for your last minute shopping.

Remember….

For a complete listing of all of the events at this year's convention, **the 2009 Trinity River Interchange,** go to our website **www.trinityriverinterchange.com .**

Well guys and gals,

MARK THAT CALENDAR *TODAY* FOR
The Trinity River Interchange
JUNE 3rd. THRU THE 7th.
'CAUSE IT'S GONNA' BE FUN!

See ya' thar' Podnah !

Company Store

	HO		N-Scale
Casey Lines	OUT		$ 5.00
Texas & African	$5.00		OUT
Waco Austin & Bryan	$5.00		$ 5.00
Anniversary Car 1951	OUT	per set	$35.00
Anniversary Cars 2001	OUT	per set	$35.00
ITC - Bob Clarke	$10.00	per set	$35.00
Quin Lines	$12.00		

Check your layout and be sure you have one of each *special run* Region car. If not we can take care of the shortage post haste.

Other items available

Cloth Region Patches	$5.00 each
Auto/Window Region Decal	$ .50
N Scale Nevadun Decals	$2.00 per sheet
HO&N Scale Daw Cha Southern Decals	$3.00 per sheet

Shipping

Please add $5.00 for up to 3 cars and add $1.00 for patches and decals

Eunice Linda, Dispatcher
3028 Cumberland
Waco, TX 76707-1219
254-754-5535
E-mail: jlinda@hot.rr.com

A RAILFAN "FIELD KIT"

By Robert G. Mangrum

If you are like me (a typical model railroader), you are as interested in the 1:1 scale as you are in the "empire in the basement or garage." As one ventures out into the right of way to railfan, it is not unusual to either do it on the spur of the moment such as when you see the most unusual railcar or that loco you've been trying to capture on film for months or the more planned trip to the best place to catch those elusive trains.

In either case, most of the time you probably discover that you don't have all the equipment you really need to make the moment a success or, at least, comfortable. I have experienced that moment several times and resolved to put together a "kit" that I would have with me in the car at all times so I wouldn't be like the proverbial fisherman always talking about "the one that got away."

The first item necessary for the railfan kit is a bag in which to place the rest of the materials needed. I use a small multipurpose bag with several compartments such as you can find at Wal-Mart.

Now for the specific contents. As I railfan primarily in Texas, I have purchased "Texas Railroad Maps" by Sonrisa Publications and SPV's "Railroad Atlas of North America: Texas" that shows all right of way trackage throughout the state as well as nearest roads for access. (Similar guides are available for other states.) This is especially helpful in areas new to the railfan. A current state highway map is also useful. I also have a GPS in the car.

The third item of great importance is a radio scanner. I have an Uniden Bearcat "Sportcat 180" which I have preset with all railroad frequencies used throughout the US. This certainly makes it easier when traveling in other parts of the country. Through trial and error field experience, I have concluded that a good earphone with an adequate cord length attached to the radio is the best utilization of the scanner as it should be attached to your belt so as to allow both hands to be free for other equipment. In order to attach the radio to my belt, I purchased a carpenter's pocket made of leather in which to securely carry the scanner. In addition to the preset frequencies, I have a three ring binder in the bag which has listings of all railroad frequencies used by the numerous roads and the channels designated for specific sites along each railroad. These lists were obtained off the internet from such sites as "North American Railroad Frequencies," "Frograil Railfan Sites," and "Rail Spot Frequency List." The latter lists railroads throughout the US by road and locations.

As most of the railroads are using track warrants, a sample track warrant has been found useful to understand and utilize the information being conveyed to the train you hope to catch in your camera lens. Said track warrant example as used by modern railroads is easily found on the internet.

I also carry as a reference an edition of the "Official Locomotive Rosters and News" published by DPL-LTA Enterprises which I have found quite helpful in identifying loco units by model, type etc.

In addition to the radio scanner frequencies, it is very important to determine where you are on the subdivision by milepost. This will give you the ability to understand any radio transmissions you pick up and be able to analyze which direction the traffic is traveling in relation to your position. A compass would also be useful in determining direction.

If you railfan a particular subdivision of a particular railroad, purchase an employee timetable at a train show. The basics of the subdivision (mileposts, location names, direction of travel, etc) will not change from edition to edition. This information will also help you identify where you are, where the trains you have scanned are and their train orders. Unfortunately, as the railroads become more automated and adopt positive train control etc, I am fearful we will not be hearing as much radio traffic as we are at presently.

The fifth item in the kit should be, of course, your camera(s). I leave that choice to you. At this time I am carrying two cameras, a digital still camera (Polaroid i532 with a 12x optical zoom) which was on sale at Walmart and a video camera JVC Everio Hard Disk Camcorder with a 35x optical zoom. In addition, I also have a tripod, carried in addition to the bag, on which to mount the video camera. I have found that the tripod is the best option for steady pictures or prolonged run-bys.

Creature comforts are next. I have a large brim "jungle hat" I picked up at Ft Hood (I'm retired Army) which is perfect for working along the right of way, as well as a pair of hiking –type boots which greatly protect your feet from the rough terrain as well as sticker weeds etc. When forced to wait for the "run-by" I use to wish there was some place to sit. I have since added a campers type folding chair (this is not in the bag) which has greatly come in handy during those inevitable long down times between run-throughs. It also has been found to be nice to have a thirst quencher since you are probably in a semi-settled area along the train route. I have two water bottles with carriers that can be attached to your belt or bag with a D hook. Make sure the water is cold before you start out. If in "unplanned mode" the empty bottle can be filled at a local convenience store at some point during the adventure.

A pair of binoculars has also been of help in those areas where you can see the track a good distance in both directions. If track signals are in the area, monitor these for change this will also give you some warning as to an approaching train. A small first aid kit would also be a good item to pack as well as a pocket knife. You might also want to pack insect repellant as well as sun blocker/sun tan lotion if spring-summer and gloves and wind breaker-coat if winter.

Several years ago BNSF started a program "Citizens for Rail Security" program which you should enroll in if your railfan interest is the BNSF (go to BNSF Homepage for information) I carry a copy of the paperwork with me when I'm out on the trail. [Of course, this article is prefaced on you will not trespass on railroad property.]

If you are on a fact finding mission, you might want to include a "measuring stick" about three foot in length with alternating black and white squares painted on it to determine length of the building, rolling stock, etc.

Finally, you need to organize and preserve the photos and other information you collected on the most recent "railfan expedition." I hope this discussion gives you some ideas about your own "railfan" kit.

Elf Stories - Part II

by Don Kimmell

As usual Vicksburg was cold-36 degrees-windy-it is a river town, but no rain! We had a ton of "local" elves-mainly Army Corps of Engineers folks, so for the "regular" elves it was going to be an easy night, yea, right. The Head Elf, Willis, put me in-charge of all the locals assigned to the up step, cool, yea right, only problem was the locals only were scheduled for one hour, so every hour you had a new crew to train…..fun, yes it was, because everyone was very much in the Christmas Spirit. The night moved along rather well, no major issues, no lost children, the usual request for "pictures with the elf", …"how come it is taking so long?" answer—someone has a long list, and just keep the crowd happy! We finished up about 8:30pm, off to dinner and bed, and beat feet to Mena, Arkansas for the next night's show. This year they assigned me a "queen" sized bedroom in the SLP (San Luis Posti). WOW!! A queen sized bed, my own private bathroom, big-screen satellite TV, a chair and small dresser. To say I was impressed is an understatement, but the reasoning behind this was I would be onboard for 10 days plus, and there are elves and then there are elves.

This year they had 3 chefs, to take some of the workload off the two regulars, so the menu was always great! We had breakfast at 8am, dinner-our "big" meal at 1pm, and as usual supper after each night's show.

We arrived in Mena at 2:30pm, and the line was already there! I think they were expecting us! "OK, let's get everything set up fast, and start the line moving as soon as possible" were the instructions, so off the train, in "proper uniform", get the various crowd-control hardware in place, trains on the track-model variety-, and let's go, it is cold 34 degrees, so dress warm! This night we started our night at 3:15pm, and already we had over 400 folks in line! And they kept coming, and coming and coming. This was going to be a long, cold night, but we were ready! As part of our visit to Mena, the town had their Christmas Parade, this occurred at 7pm, and I saw a "first"—a cement truck decorated with Christmas lights, I had never seen anything like that before!! Ah, small town Arkansas! We finally finished the evening at 8:30pm, some 2000 folks later, and the temp had dropped to 25! Are we having fun yet? Off to Heavener, over Rich Mountain—highest point on the railroad-and tomorrow night's show, we will spend the night in the yards.

Cold greeted us the next morning-like 15-not something the Louisiana elf is used to! But it was eat at 8am, then off to stuff bags and clean….finished by 11am, so some free time, of course we are sitting by the engine house, so we are told… "be very careful leaving the train, walk down to the road crossing-500 yards away-to cross the tracks and be careful!" We did. At the yard office we met a train crew, waiting for their southbound coal drag, the yardmaster and assistant, roadmaster, trainmaster, and about a dozen other folks who were very happy to have us in town—actually they were glad to have us in the yards, off the "main", so we were not in anybody's way slowing things down. This is a real concern for everyone in that we are "limited" to 40mph, when it seems everyone else can go 55, on a one-lane track!

As in Mena, in Heavener, we would be blocking the "main" for that evening's show, so they held us off as long as they could, so at 3pm we backed down to our spot for that night's event, of course a crowd formed almost immediately, so let's start early-cold-30 degrees, windy, and generally winter, but everyone was ready, so Santa arrived by camo'd pick-up, first time for this, and off we go. This evening I had a first, among the camouflaged family's, we had a number of young ladies in pink camo…never seen that before!! The one benefit to starting early, is usually you are finished early…or so we hoped, which this evening turned our to be true, finished by 8pm, so early supper! We would be again spending the night in the yard, so no movement, good night to sleep!

We left the next morning during breakfast, with Noel, MO, as our next stop. I had never been on this segment of the railroad, so I was looking forward to some new scenery. It was pretty in a winterly, desolate way, and an added bonus, was very spotty cell phone reception. Actually it was sort of funny, everyone was asking everyone else…"do you have a signal?"..".."..How many bars do you have..?" Peaceful! Not a single carrier maintained good coverage, so whenever we went thru a town, everyone that need to make a call, was on the phone, while waving to the public! Are we having fun yet?

We arrived in Noel with just enough time to set up, and they were expecting us…the line had formed at 3pm we were informed by the Police Chief, so lets get a move on, oh yeah, we were blocking the main and also the road crossing in the center of town, so off we go. Cold, 30, windy, almost snow…this is sure not the South! The local folks kept us supplied with hot beverages, which did help with the cold, but that opened another can of worms…bathrooms…ours was on the train, which was 500 yards away! Again we had an early evening, finished by 8:30pm. On to Pittsburg, Kansas. This would be an overnight run, we have tied up things enough, so we were moving right along..41mph….bed.

Woke up in the yards of Pittsburg, former site of KCS' biggest roundhouse/backshop area. There are still some of the buildings standing, as are a number of massive foundations. This was going to be a "normal" day, bagging, cleaning, bagging and cleaning. We had not done any serious bagging in a couple of days, so it was now time to get on with things. We have visited Pittsburg every year, and it is usually a great crowd, so let's prepare….of course the weather was not going to cooperate….30s/windy/sleet…are we having fun yet? We would be backing down to that evening's show location about 2:30pm, so everyone needed to be ready, by 3pm….as we backed down thru town, we crossed just about every major street, stalling all the school traffic…but no one was upset, they just followed us to that evening's location, and we were not even off the train before the line formed…another early start—3:15pm….again this evening we had a number of locals folks helping, so the "regulars" got to step back and entertain the waiting crowd..average wait was 35 minutes…so some showmanship was necessary, another fun part of the trip. This evening we had 1900 visitors, a good show! I guess the radio station that was doing the "Live Show", did you ever try an interview an Elf?

Woke up in Kansas City, to 25 degrees, and the promise of snow…this sure isn't Louisiana! Today will be a re-stock, clean and reorganize day for the few elves that are left..We are now down to 6 volunteers…there are rumors that we may get a couple more..but the crew is pretty thin…I wonder if this is weather related? Can't hack the cold? Or is it the Yankees? I don't know, but there are very few Southern Elves left. Stuff bags and clean things up, as we are heading back to the Belle, it starts to snow….they say not more than 3 to 6 inches…I have not seen this much in many years. Sounds like a day to kick back and rest up for the trip across the Gateway Western. We are informed at supper that evening, we will be doing a "live" morning TV show tomorrow. Like 6am, they want to have shots of the train arriving in Blue Springs with all 25,000 plus lights blazing, Santa in his sleigh and a nice group of elves waving…sounds like a marketing idea…but because this could be dangerous, what with the train moving, we will only use railroad employees. Great, we can watch the show from the dome car and enjoy, seeing that it is going to be 5 degrees in the morning….sure ain't home….Well as they say, the best laid plans…..a couple of us Southern Elves were up, planning to watch the festivities, drinking coffee, etc…when the Head Elf, says…"get in you uniform, we need someone to run the trains…" three guess who was drafted….NOW! I was a bit off on the temperature, it was 3, so off we go, not dressed right, but we are in costume! We had to wait in the cold for about 45 minutes while they moved the train off the main to the siding, moved the "F" units to push the Holiday Express for the "proper" shot…they had to use a fusee to warm up the switch lock and thaw the locks on the car doors. All this time we are slowly turning to a human popsicle See what you get for being an early riser! Everything went off without a hitch, everyone, specialty the PR folks, were very happy, except for the three frozen Louisiana Elves….it took us about an hour to thaw…..are we having fun yet?

I was on board for two weeks this year, they convinced me I needed to travel the "northern" leg…and freeze my you know what, but I wouldn't trade the experience for anything! This year the Holiday Express made 23 stops, mostly on the northern part of the system, entertained 35,841 folks, gave away over 14,000 bags, and brought Holiday Cheer to some very needy folks.

I am looking forward to next year!

Up The Track

By Bill Dryden

Here is the list of the upcoming events within the LSR of which I am aware. I will provide all the information YOU send me or I can glean from other publications, websites, etc., for these events. Additional information may be available through the NMRA *Scale Rails* and/or various trade magazines or various websites. Please forward any and all information about upcoming events or activities in your area, club, etc., to me via email at bdr149@airmail.net. Also, note that all show times and dates are at the discretion of the sponsoring organization and are subject to change. **The upcoming events:**

LSR Convention:

Lone Star Region 58th Annual Convention (2009)
Irving, TX

The Lone Star Region NMRA 58th Annual Convention will be held at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Irving beginning Wednesday, June 3rd and continuing through Sunday, June 7th under the watchful eye of Jerry Hoverson, MMR and Convention Chair, and a fine team of talented volunteer leaders. The Sheraton is conveniently located near DFW Airport. A room rate of $98/night has been negotiated. Other details are being worked out and will be added as the details become more firm — Check the LSR website. **Come all!! PARTICIPATE!!!**

Recurring events and meetings:

LSR Division 3 - Northeast Texas Division - Monthly Meeting
Garland
Nicholson Memorial Library, 625 Austin St., Garland, TX Third Saturday of each month. For more information check the Division 3 Page on the LSR website or contact Duane Richardson duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com

Alamo Model Railroad Engineers Meeting
San Antonio
The Alamo Model Railroad Engineers meets the 2nd Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in the Zucht Building at the Texas Transportation Museum; 11791 Wetmore Rd.; San Antonio TX. For more information call Peter Shavney (210) 317-3661 or Gene Trruner (210) 355-2777; or visit the web site www.alamomodelrailroadengineers.com.

DFW Area Lionel Modular Group Meeting
Plano
The DFW Lionel Modular Group meets the second Monday of the month at 6:45 p.m. in the Gladys Harrington Library, 1501 East 18th St.; Plano, TX. For more information call (972) 422-4330.

Houston Area Live Steamers
Hockley ,TX
Come enjoy free train rides on our 7,500 feet of 7½-inch gauge track. Public run days are the 3rd Saturday of the month March thru November. US Hwy 290 and Roberts Road; Times are 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.. We can always open special days for Model Railroaders. For more info go to www.hals.org or contact Peter Bryan at peterb@ppdq.net

North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs Meeting
Irving, TX
The North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs (NTC) meets the third Tuesday of the month. Visit the NTC website www.dfwtrainshows.com for more information about the NTC, its meeting site or its member clubs. All model railroaders welcome.

Events and Shows:

May 2009

9th — **Texas & Pacific Employees' Reunion and National Train Day Celebration** Texas & Pacific Depot and Museum; 800 N. Washington; Marshall, TX For More Information, call: (903) 938-9495

16th — **Lone Star TCA Meet** Sat. 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Adults $6; Family $9 New Braunfels Civic Center; 380 Seguin St.; New Braunfels, TX Contact: Pat Halpin at (210) 661-4238 or PatHalpin@aol.com

June

3rd – 7th — **Trinity River Exchange LSR 58th Convention** Irving, TX

5th – 7th — **Kansas City Historical Society Annual Convention** The Landmark on Lee Street; 2920 Lee Street; Greenville, TX For More Information, call: (903) 455-4935 or www.greenvillerailroadmuseum.com

16th — **"Building Boxcars at the Marshall Shops"** B.B. Stone, Discussions at the Depot Texas & Pacific Depot and Museum; 800 N. Washington; Marshall, TX For More Information, call: (903) 938-9495

July

10th – 12 — **NMRA Hartford National** Hartford, CT http://hn2009.org/home.html

25th – 26th — **7th Annual Balcones Heights Crossroads Family Train Show** Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Sun. 10:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adult $7; Family $10 Crossroads Convention Center; 4522 Fredericksburg Road; Balcones Heights, TX Contact: Ralph Alexander (210) 656-9178

August

18th — **"Fascinating T&P Artifacts"** Claire Evans, Discussions at the Depot Texas & Pacific Depot and Museum; 800 N. Washington; Marshall, TX For More Information, call: (903) 938-9495

Future Events (More Information to follow as available)

October

10th – 11th — **LMRA 27th Model Train Show** Lockheed/Martin Recreational Area; Fort Worth, TX Contact: http://www.lmra.org/activity.html

Mastering Modeling - How To Dress up a Figure

By Tracy Mitchell and Terry Mitchell MMR's

In this installment, we are going to pick up where we left off in the last issue. In the last issue we talked about detailing vehicles. In this one, we will deal with the other supporting actors on the layout. Those being people, or figures on the layout.

Before we talk about placing figures on the layout, we need to dress them up. Most figures today, come pre-painted in really bright colors. These colors need to be toned down a little. As you read this look down at what you are wearing. Now look at a figure for a layout. Are their clothes as dull and faded as what you have on? Probably not.

The easiest way to solve this problem is to spray the figures with Dullcote. This will tone down their shiny skin. A better way is to give the figure a bath with Alcohol/Black India Ink stain. For those of you that are fairly new to the hobby and do not know what Alcohol/Black India Ink stain is, here is the formula. 1 to 2 scant teaspoons of Black India Ink to one pint of 70 or 91% Isopropyl alcohol. The key is to use more than 1 teaspoon, but less than two. If you use 2 teaspoons it will be way to dark for most applications.

What this stain does is get into any crack or crevice on the figure. Wrinkles in the clothes really pop out after the stain is applied.

One problem with painting figures is they are really hard to hold the figures while painting them. A simple solution to this problem is a dowel with Silly putty on one end. The figures are pushed into the silly putty and are held in place without ruining the figures.

One of the biggest problems is after some time of accumulating figures you will wind up with several in the same pose. Even changing a shirt color to make the figure appear to not be a clone is not enough. Several easy ways to alter figures are to add or change a hat. When figures are wearing a ball cap add a thin piece of paper around the hat to give it a look of a sombrero or other wide brim hats. You can also do that in reverse. Remove a part of a hat to make it appear to be a ball cap. You can even remove all the brims and paint the figure with a bald head.

Female figures are a little bit harder but can be changed as well. Skirt length is a great way. Skirts can be added to a figure as easily as gluing small strips of paper around the waist to make the dress appear longer. To raise the hem line, simply file the dress off to the shape of the figure and paint the skin area exposed, with a flesh color.

Another way to add variety to your figures and this may sound grisly is to chop off a limb and re position it into a different pose. Simple things like rotating an arm at the shoulder so the engineer's hand looks like he is reaching the throttle. You can also cut the head off and turn it to make it appear they are looking in that direction.

For a display Tracy was building, he cut the hind legs off of a horse and repositioned them so it appeared the horse was sitting. Tracy then added long ears and the horse now became a stubborn mule. To finish the scene he added a pack to the horse and had a prospector trying to get the stubborn mule going. A simple modification now became an attention getter.

To make the cuts appear more natural you might have to add some body filler to fill the joints. Squadron Green putty or Gap filling CA (Super glue) works great for this.

Amputations are even easier, though you shouldn't have more than two on your layout. The one armed man that David Jansen was searching for in the hit TV show "The Fugitive" would be a good conversation piece. Others could be a man on crutches missing a foot, or even a better, a sailor with a peg leg. They would all add interest to a scene. If you model the "Good Ole Days" of railroading it was not uncommon to see a man with a limb missing. Main thing is keep these to a minimum. You don't want to be Ghoulish.

One of the most common criticism of the vehicles is they look stupid with nobody behind the wheel. The problem is there is little room for a full size figure in the vehicles. A simple solution is to whack the body in half and attach the upper torso into the vehicle. Only someone with the most astute eyes will be able to tell that the person driving had no legs. Also take the lower torso that you no longer need and add them under a vehicle. This makes it appear that someone is working on the vehicle.

We saw at a Narrow Gauge convention someone had a highway being black topped. They had a steam roller on a road. They added a leg torso under the roller. A splatter of red paint on the road as well as the roller finished the scene. Gruesome it was, but it got your attention.

Think about using different scale figures to give a more forced perspective. You will be surprised at how much depth you can add by simply adding a figure or a vehicle in a smaller scale to the background area of your layout. Make sure you don't have any other object of a different scale near the figure. If you do you will lose your forced perspective.

Now that you have your figures weathered and posed in a position you like, how do you mount them on the layout. Some modelers drill a small hole in one of the legs and poke a thin wire into the hole. They then drill another hole into the layout and add the figure that way. To us that is a waste of time and effort. The hardest thing to do is a drill a hole into a leg without the drill bit coming out at the knee caps. A much easier way is to pour some CA glue into a yogurt cup lid (or any flat suitable surface) poke the figure into the puddle of glue and place it where you want it on the layout. Spray some Kicker or accelerator on the figure. This is much faster. When building the Texas Children's hospital layout, Tracy planted over a hundred figures in about an hour.

With these few tips, your layout will come to life. Isn't that what you wanted all along?

Back to Modeling
TNT

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

by Elbert Smith

LSR Financial Accounts

Beginning January 1, 2009		
Checking Account		$5,141.38
Vanguard Money Market Accts Total		$38,806.12
Funds Held For Div. 1 (Not LSR Funds)		$1,960.37
Funds Held For Div. 3 (Not LSR Funds)		$225.60
Total LSR Net Worth (LSR Funds Only)		**$41,761.53**
Checking Account Income		
Ad, Pike	152.00	
Decals	7.00	
Division 1 Income	227.92	
Division 3 Income	80.08	
NMRA Region Rebate	983.00	
Vanguard MM (CD Fund)	132.88	
Vanguard MM (Convention Fund)	47.18	
Subtotal	**$1,630.06**	
Checking Account Disbursements		
Board Meetings (Copying)	27.09	
Convention (Projectors & Advance)	2,770.90	
Division 1 Expenses	35.29	
Marker Lamp Print & Mail	1,355.37	
Membership	187.05	
Subtotal	**$4,375.70**	
Ending March 31, 2009		
Checking Account		**$2,395.74**
Vanguard Money Market Accts Total		**$38,806.12**
Funds Held For Div. 1 (Not LSR Funds)		**$2,153.00**
Funds Held For Div. 3 (Not LSR Funds)		**$305.68**
Total LSR Net Worth (LSR Funds Only)		**$38,743.18**

Total NMRA/LSR Membership inside the LSR area on March 31 was 1012. Two years ago, the total NMRA/LSR membership inside the LSR was 1020.

New Members – Please take note of these new NMRA/LSR members. They're listed alphabetically by state and by city, and their Division number is shown, to help identify those who live in your area. When you run into them, say hello, and invite them to attend your model-railroading activities

Louisiana

Tritos Monk, Bossier City
Duane Newton, Haughton

Texas

Bill Bunce, Austin
Mark Grzovic, Beaumont
Lewis Deen, Brownwood
Jami Howell, Brownwood
Fred Holland, College Station
Gracie Robinson, Commerce
Perry Noblett, Crowley
Tom Jones, Dallas
Thomas Rohrer, Flower Mound
Bob Black, Frisco
William Pennington, Garland
William Harlow, Glen Rose
Crawford Bunkley, Houston
Eduardo Pope, Irving
Robert Powell, Lago Vista
Jerry Bowen, Linsay
Kurt Umlauf, McKinney
Blake Kral, North Zulch
Terry Schmidt, Plano
Larry Wood, Plano
Lawrance Luehring, Portland
Ralph Alexander, San Antonio
Joel Hager, San Antonio
Alan Serold, San Antonio
Earl Gilmore, Spring
Blake Bogs, Spring
Michael Feagin, Sugar Land
Joseph Kanusky, Sugar Land
Roger MacAuley, The Woodlands
Ronald Buddemeir, Victoria
Ethan Vogel, Virginia Beach
Matthew Halbert, Windcrest

LADIES ONLY!

Petticoat Junction

FLOWERPOT NUTCRACKER CLINIC

Ellen Scott

Set a guard in your hallway, or on the tree with these charming nutcracker soldiers. Cozy and fun to make they can be a colorful addition to your decorations.

I got the idea for the flowerpot nutcrackers from a craft brochure at Hobby Lobby. However I didn't care for the face which was ho-hum and I knew I could do a better one myself. I started out first with a five foot tall nutcracker only because my husband wouldn't let me get a bigger set of flowerpots. Obviously for safety concerns plastic pots instead of clay have to be used. Once my nutcracker was complete, I went to somewhat larger than dollhouse sized using wooden flower pots much like we will be using in the clinic. These were much smaller to work on and loads of fun to do, but I gave them all away and didn't keep any for myself. Our church had a Harvest Festival to raise money for charity so I made some 12" tall nutcrackers. Then I made some even larger for the auction for the Homeless and even found some fabric to fur their hats. Again, I never kept any for myself.

The color scheme and decorations are left to your imagination. Each becomes a unique personality in its own right. I also furred the 5' tall nutcracker that I did keep, with a real light weight, extremely soft fabric. He looks real cool standing outside my door at Christmas time.

I am sure that the ladies will get a kick out of using their imaginations and creative side to make a one of a kind nutcracker for Christmas 2009. Once they have made one, they can go on as I have and make all different sizes. The size limitations are only in the pots you can find.

FROM THE PAST (Spring 1984)

By Jim Long, MMR LSR Historian

At the LSR BOD Mid-Year Meeting held in Waco, LSR President Ed Quin appointed Jack Leming of Dallas to serve as Chairman of the 50th Anniversary Committee. This committee is established to insure LSR participation in the 50th Anniversary of the NMRA promotion throughout the Region. Ben Pearlman made a motion that was seconded and carried that "The LSR will establish a fund raising campaign with an $8,000.00 goal, to be used to furnish and construct the foyer of the NMRA Building.

A new 100% NMRA /LSR model railroad club has been formed in Ft. Worth. The club will be named "The Cowtown Society of Model Railroaders" and membership is limited to 20. Temporary officers are: **President:** Ciro Lopiccolo, Crowley, Texas. **Superintendent:** K. B. King, Jr., Ft. Worth, Texas. **Paymaster:** Robert Stevens, Ft. Worth, Texas. **Secretary:** Bob G. Jones, MMR, Ft. Worth, Texas.

Continued on next page

Bob Clarke of Schertz, Texas reports that he uses a lot of rubble/trash to make scenic ground cover come alive. Look at Mother Nature and the habits of Americans; things are misplaced all over. Litter, fallen tree limbs, brush piles, junk piles, wrecked vehicles, piles of rock, sand, wood, piles of throw-aways from industries, etc., etc., etc, Some sources: **Junk piles** – Chooch, Woodlands Scenics and others **Wood piles** – McLeod, Saeges, Scrap Box **Litter** – small pieces, 1/4" square, of paper wadded and stained light yellow. **Wrecked vehicles**– we all have them–use a soldering iron and practice. **Tree limbs** – visit your favorite flower shop and ask for the scraps in the bottom of shipping boxes of wood products and dried flowers . **Piles of rock** –make piles to suit, soak with water and apply diluted earth or sand, white glue or matte medium

Larry Redmond, LSR Convention Chairman, is looking for the switching layout that has been used in the past at the LSR conventions held in Houston – anybody knows where it is contact Larry – pronto. Two local members of SanJac are running for NMRA offices – Dr. Bob Ellis (the painless dentist) for President and Ed Quin for Southern Vice President.

Cowcatcher Division 1

by Chris Atkins

Things are really shaping up for the convention in Irving this June. Members from the cowcatcher division have really stepped up by taking several of the committee chairs and otherwise volunteering their time during the convention. If you'd like to lend a hand while attending, please send me an email at chris@railroadmodelers.com or call me at 214 222 1285 and I'll add you to the list. We need people to man the registration and information tables and help out with the silent auction and other activities during the convention.

We are very happy to have a very special banquet speaker, Harold Carstens. Harold as most of you know is the retired editor of *Railroad Model Craftsman*, and is known as a pioneer in our hobby for his many and interesting stories.

I hope by now, you sent your registration in and took advantage of the early registration discount. If you haven't registered, you'll want to send your registration in as soon as possible in order to be able to register for any of the extra fare items that are filling up fast. Some of those include the prototype tours of the BNSF Network Operations Center, the McKinney Avenue Trolley Car Barn and the Trinity Rail Express Shops.

There are also Super Bus Tours of the best layout in both the Dallas and Ft. Worth area. Convention goers and spouses alike are quickly filling the Wine Tasting Tour where you get a Trinity River Interchange souvenir bottle of wine. There are still a few extra fare clinics available. These all are make and take clinics like the Tortoise & Diode Matrix clinic, the Walthers 3 in 1 clinic, and the non rail necklace clinic.

This year we are offering online registration and Paypal credit card payments through the company store at http://trinityriverrails.com. You can also view and purchase shirts, decals and everything else on the registration form. If you would prefer to pay by check, you can use the online form to save the hassle of printing.

I have recently added detailed calendars to the web site at http://trinityriverinterchange.com to help you avoid scheduling conflicting events when you register. As I write this, the clinic schedule hasn't been finalized, but I hope to get it on the web site before you read this. I do know that there are over 90 clinic slots filled and a number of clinic presenters are from outside the LSR. Paul Richardson has recruited several of his neighbors in Kansas City to give clinics. A couple of these guys are Master Model Railroaders.

Division 1 and 3 members have really delivered when asked to open their homes and clubs for self drive layout tours. With around 45 layouts available, you will have plenty of opportunities to see your neighbor's progress between Wednesday and Sunday. Make sure to check the website as the convention draws closer for a complete schedule of open houses.

Of course, the real highlight of the convention will be the train ride on the Grapevine Vintage Railroad from the historic Grapevine Cotton Belt depot to the stockyards in Ft. Worth. This excursion is being provided by the LSR and included with any registration.

Because of the proximity to the convention, we won't have a quarterly meeting in May. Instead, I'm suggesting that division 1 members on the train should get together at the Ft. Worth Stockyards during the dinner break, and the division will buy the group Bar B Q. I'll have more information about this as the convention approaches.

Bayou Division 2

by Dick Schneider

This has been a very busy quarter. I had the opportunity to visit with several model railroaders and operate on either their personal pikes or their club layouts and had a great time doing it.

Our division suffered an unexpected loss this quarter. A good friend and long time modeler, Tom Johnson, 78, passed away 2/23/09 after an unsuccessful battle with multiple myeloma. Tom was a member of the Baton Rouge Model RR Club and his ready smile and his electrical expertise in DCC will be sorely missed by all his friends.

Jack Green and Mickey Guidry of the MidSouth Model RR Club in Baton Rouge collected and delivered to NMRA Headquarters in Chattanooga, a Chevy Suburban load of model RR magazines for the archives. They were warmly welcomed and given a tour of NMRA Headquarters. They stopped along the way back and attended the "World's Greatest Hobby Show" in Memphis, TN. They were unimpressed with WGH.

Art Houston and I were attendees at the San Jacinto Model RR Show in Houston, TX and we were *very* impressed. I know my wallet was considerably lighter when I left but my locomotive inventory was larger by two. Gotta love the UP, they have at least one of everything.

The Crescent City Model RR Club is in the news again. Through some decisive maneuvering, the club voted to remove

and replace one of the layout's main peninsulas. The vote was close. When the group next met some of the members had already demolished portions of the peninsula. Guess they were concerned about those falling chads and talk of a recount. All in all, however, the new routing of the tracks will allow for a more realistic railroad and one that will allow operators to "follow their trains" when DCC is fully implemented. CCMRC has approximately 15 members and room for more. Interested??

Lou Shultz, C & O Railway, Clifton Forge Division, Covington, LA held a memorable Special Operating Session, 2/29. He ran an all steam session as his last SOS and will now begin a 1 ½ year period where steam and diesel integrate. After that it will be all diesel. Lou said that it takes 23 people to run steam and 18 to run diesel. Wonder if that is similar to what the prototypes experienced? By the way, Lou was one of the founders of the Crescent City Model RR Club in New Orleans.

Met with Walter Reiger while attending Lou Shultz's SOS. Walter models the C & O, TP Division during the 1980's. He has 138 miles of Southern Railways "Rat Hole". It extends from Danville to Oakdale, has 750" of mainline, 3 helixes and takes 15 people to operate. He is starting on the scenery phase of the layout.

I had the opportunity to go to Tulsa, OK with my spouse, Charlotte. While she took care of business, I attended the Tulsa Train Show at their convention center. I had a great time and increased my locomotive inventory by two.

On many occasions the MidSouth Model RR Club of Baton Rouge and Jim Loflands Tall Timber & Santa Fe will jointly sponsor an interchange with other clubs and hold "operations" together. Two groups, one from MS and the other from the All Points North Model RR Club of Conroe, TX attended the Feb. and April sessions and a good time was had by all. MidSouth will hold open "operations" on the first Saturdays of May, July, Sept., and Nov. 2009. Reserve a spot by contacting Jack Green at 225-978-4262.

Well, guess I better close for now or the *Marker Lamp* will be charged extra postage. Next issue will include the S Gaugers, the Baton Rouge Model RR Club, Jim Loflands Tall Timber & Santa Fe, and the infamous Art Houston now of Houma, LA. Art's layout is under construction, in its own building, involves mucho electronics, and the pictures I saw of it are really good. Till next time, "Laissez les bon ton rouler!" – Let the good times roll!

North East Texas Division 3

by Duane Richardson, MMR

Well…the train is pulling into the station and it's hard to believe that our journey over the last 4 years is drawing to a close. It has been a lot of fun to see where we started and what it has become. With a LOT of help and energy from a few tireless individuals we have built something really special here in Division 3. We have a really active group of members and it's been a ton of fun to be involved in it all. I do need to take a quick second to thank some folks who have been a big help over the years. Most recently, Larry Swigert has shown what thinking outside the box is all about. His approach has been so unique that many of us, including myself, have had times where we step back and scratch our heads wondering why that hadn't been done before. We've had a few clinicians that have shared their talents with us and I thank them for lending a hand. I would be HUGELY remiss if I didn't pass on a big Thank You to Tom Browning. Tom was my right hand man for most of this journey and his effort was the definition of Above and Beyond the Call of Duty. Gents, and Ladies, it has truly been a pleasure. I know our Division is in good hands and I look forward to seeing what Jerry Hoverson does with it.

For anybody who hasn't read here what's been going on or hasn't been involved, we meet the 3rd Saturday of each month at the Nicholson Memorial Library in downtown Garland. We are right behind the DART rail station if you want to take the train. We are not meeting in May, as we are all busy putting the finishing touchs on the upcoming convention. Jerry will be hosting the meetings going forward after the convention. It will be the dog days of summer but we'll see what kind of fun gets cooked up.

The convention is almost upon us and here are a few things we have going: 46 layouts on tour from Z to G, 95 operating slots in 17 sessions on 14 layouts, 90 hours of clinics by 37 different presenters (We've got 5 coming from the Mid-Continent Region including their president and the past and current National AP Chairman, Brett Gallant, the owner of Sierra West Models, Fran & Miles Hale of Woodland Scenics how-to videos, Presidents of both the Texas State Railroad and the Museum of American Railroads), and A 7 1/2 inch gauge display at the Hotel. If you have ever read anything from Carsten's Publications (like *Railroad Model Craftsman*) then our guest speaker will sound familiar. Harold Carstens of Carstens Publishing is giving our speech on Saturday night. There are lots of Non-Rail activities including the "Linus" project and a wine tasting trip. Last, and by no means least, there is the FREE train ride on the Grapevine Vintage Railroad. The ride is sponsored by the LSR and is free to everyone who attends the convention. Check out the convention website at http://www.trinityriverinterchange.com/ to keep up with all the things that are going on.

I hope you have been working hard on your contest models. I'm looking forward to yet another long night of judging. I'm hoping to see that you have all been busy and we look forward to seeing what you have done. If you have any questions about the contest, please feel free to give me a call, send an email, send a letter, Western Union…you get the idea.

I hope to see you all at the next meeting.

Cen-Tex Division 4

by Bill Dryden, Jr

No Report Received

Division 5

by Dave Lamberts

I received an e-mail from Jim Hartel who was kind enough to send me some information on activities on their club in San Angelo. The Concho Valley Model Railroad Club is heavily involved in building and maintaining the model railroad layouts at the Historic Orient Santa Fe Railroad Museum in San Angelo <www.railwaymuseumsanangelo.homestead.com>.

We currently have five layouts at the museum, a 12 x 6 foot N scale layout that represents the KCM&O as it looked in 1928 in San Angelo. An HO scale layout of the Copper Canyon area of Mexico to the Barnhart Texas cattle pens. It is a U-shaped 30 x 4 foot layout. There is also a 4 x 10 foot HO scale layout freelanced and originally built by a junior high school class and a new 9 x 30 foot O scale layout that they have loosely based on the Sante Fe Railroad from Ballinger, Texas to the San Angelo yard.

We received a donation of a free standing 4 x 16 foot N scale layout. The Lem Allan family of Coleman, Texas donated this layout. Mr. Allan worked on it for many years. When he moved to Argentina with his cattle operation he packed it up and shipped it south. He passed away in Argentina before he ever unpacked it. The family donated it to the Museum and has endowed its renovation. This railroad has two 4 x 8 foot modules that bolt together. Due to space limitations we will rework it into an L-shaped layout with the two 8 foot sections connected to a 4 x 4 corner section. We hope to have this project finished by Labor Day 2009.

This is the 100th anniversary of the old KCM&O depot in San Angelo and a year-long celebration with special activities is planned. There will be a Harvey girl display, a KCM&O and Poncho Villa exhibit along with other exhibits and displays culminating with a large celebration around Labor Day with the presentation of a Historic Landmark Marker by the Texas Historical Commission.

From Jim Hartle San Angelo, I also received a copy of the Amarillo Railroad Museum's newsletter called Run 8 from Bob Roth. He writes about the problem the club is having attracting new members. Does this sound familiar? Some suggestions discussed in the newsletter include appointing a Publicity Coordinator to take on some responsibilities for publicizing their existence. Their web site was recently upgraded. Other ideas included making posters for bulletin boards and finding other ways to advertize their club including using the media - newspaper, radio and TV. They brought up the possibility of trying to get an article about the club published in magazines. We can reach this and other suggestions through their excellent web site <www.amarillorailmuseum.com>.

The Lubbock Model Railroad Association (LMRA) has also been busy. Last September we set up our club layout and modules at the annual Cowboy's Symposium. In October we had our annual "Playday" to which we invite the public. As reported in the last *Marker Lamp*, we had our annual auction in February.

Hearing from some clubs outside the Lubbock area was enjoyable. Falling into the trap of assuming that Division Five is the Lubbock Division is easy, when in fact there are many other railroaders out there. I will try harder to reach out to them in the future.

Division 6

by Fred Bock, MMR

This quarter's column starts out with a big "Congratulations!" to **Alan Serold** of the **Alamo Model Railroad Engineers** (AMRE) division of the **Texas Transportation Museum** (TTM). Alan was selected as an LSR Youth Membership Scholarship winner from Division 6 for this year. Alan has been an active member of the AMRE HO club for several years. He has been a mainstay in keeping trains running for the public on the HO layout at TTM on Saturdays and Sundays, and also pinch-hits as a conductor-brakeman when needed on TTM's 1:1-scale **Longhorn & Western** railroad. Alan likes big diesel locomotives, 89' auto parts boxcars and auto-racks, TOFC and container trains, and other examples taken from the contemporary prototype railroad scene. Next time you visit TTM, look him up.

For your's truly, this quarter has been . . . fuzzy! I've spent the time recovering from two back-to-back detached retina repairs (eye surgeries), leaving me effectively a Cyclops with no depth perception, mostly stuck at home, and a real crimp in my railroad Internet research and modeling activities. My ophthalmic surgeon at Brooke Army Medical Center, **Dr. Goff**. has the deft touch with his tiny tools that makes even the best modelers look clumsy. The surgeries and recovery were no picnic, but, as **Al Boos, MMR** would say, "It beats a poke in the eye with a sharp stick!" Maybe so, Al, but not by much; I'd just as soon pass on another opportunity for either experience.

In other news: at this writing we've been in the middle of the "train show season". **SAMRA** held a successful annual train show in the Live Oak Civic Center at the end of January; one of the recurring features of the SAMRA show are the layout tours of home layouts in the San Antonio area

A few weeks later the "World's Greatest Hobby on Tour" came to the San Antonio convention center at the end of February. A month later, in March, the **New Braunfels Railroad Historical and Modelers' Society** held their annual spring show at the newly renovated New Braunfels Civic Center.

What would you do with a clubhouse with more than 40,000 square feet? Well, the **San Antonio N-track (SANTRAK)** group recently moved into just such a facility: an unleased warehouse/office belonging to Prologis near the AT&T arena. So they're going to try something different; the

last weekend in April is the date for the first ever SANTRAK Modular Model Railroad Meet. Modular clubs from all over south and central Texas have been invited to come, set-up, and operate for two days in the mammoth facility. So far, it looks as if there will be layouts in "Z", "N-trak", "N-scale T-trak", HO portable layouts, and large-scale. What's different is that participants, if they choose, can set-up the weekend before, operate during the week and on the weekend, and then have the following week to take down. This may be the first and only SANTRAK Modular Model Railroad Meet, but it will be interesting to see how it succeeds.

Something to put on your calendar: **SANTRAK** will be holding it's annual "Balcones Heights Summer Family Train Show" the second weekend in July. You will find more information on the SANTRAK website at www.samratx.org.

Finally: looking long-range out. **SAMRA** is also hosting the **LSR 2010 "Alamo Rails" Convention** in June 2010. Convention chairman **Paul Steves** is looking for any LSR members, particularly those in Division 6, who want to share their ideas for "what will make a good convention", and to become part of the convention committee. Paul has already held two convention planning meetings, but there are plenty of opportunities for LSR members to get involved, whether or not they are SAMRA members. You can contact Paul at stevespj@aol.com, or look for the convention link on the SAMRA website for more information. And keep checking the website for more information as the planning comes to fruition.

That's it for right now, ya'll. Hope to see many of you at **the LSR 2009 "Trinity River Junction"** convention in Dallas. 2009 Convention chairman Jerry Hoverson and crew have a cornucopia of activities planned; you won't be disappointed!

Division 7

by Don Kimmell

Greetings from North Louisiana, I hope everyone has had a productive winter.

First off, I shall ask everyone if they have made plans to attend this years Convention? From the advanced information, the folks over in the Metroplex are planning another great one, train ride, some prototype tours of hard to see places, a wonderful assortment of clinics—with some out of town talent, and a huge number of layouts open for viewing, not to forget the great shopping possibilities. So make your reservations now!!

Now what has been going on in this area. The JETTS Longview Show, which moved its dates to the end of March, rather than the start, was a HUGE success according to Homer…2 day total attendance was 1500+ with adults and kids, one of the best ever! Talking to the Vendors, everyone had a "profitable" event. There were 5 layouts, from N to O, with multiple trains running at all times, not to mention the usual bells, horns and whistles sounding in the background. A fun time was had by all.

By the time you read this, the Tyler Tap/Cotton Belt show will be history, I am looking forward to attending this show as they always roll out the carpet for everyone. It is a small, but fun show, so sorry if you missed it.

We now have a small hobby shop in Jefferson, Texas. It is downtown backing up to the KCS tracks. If you are in the area stop by and say hello.

The Folks at the Texas State Railroad are planning a big spring event, so keep your eyes and ears open, they will be doing some marketing at the area train shows and hobby shops. They had over 27,000 attend their Polar Express event in December, so come on out and play with the "real ones".

Mr. Goodrich has started on his layout, now that they are finished with his room. Track work is underway, backdrop is painted and some buildings are in place, in fact he can run a train back and forth. More to come.

Well, that is about all from Shreveport, I look forward to see everyone at the convention in June, you will enjoy.

Texas Gulf Division 8

by Ray Byer

It is that time again. Well in Division 8, we have had are first meeting of the year, and it was it well attended. We have some great events planned for this year. One of the first is a Chili cook-off and photo taking event in Alvin, Texas at the historic Santa Fe Station on May 30th. We have some chili cook-off teams sign up, so come out and be a judge. On July 25 at 10:00 am, the Houston Railroad Museum has gracefully agreed to host the next Division 8 meeting. And on October the 10th starting at 10 am H.A.L.S. has gracefully agreed to host the Annul Business meeting and Picnic with deep fried turkeys (if IKE doesn't return).

On the local level we have be contacted by a school in Katy, Texas asking for some help with a train around there front lobby area. Hopefully construction will start soon. The Division has made a donation to H.A.L.S. for their Bridge project. Attached is a photo of Peter Bryan (treasurer of Division 8) making the presentation of a check to Jim Cash, president of HALS. Thanks for all the help in the past and into the future.

On the Achievement Program, we have a person who has made Master Builder-Structures this person name is Kelly Russell, so if you need some buildings made he is the man for the job.

Looking forward to seeing all my friends at the next convention, in Dallas this year. Thanks for your time.

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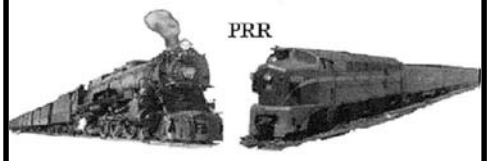

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